

COUNTY OF YORK

MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 28, 2004 (BOS Mtg. 7/13/04)

TO: York County Board of Supervisors

FROM: James O. McReynolds, County Administrator

SUBJECT: Virginia Cooperative Extension/ Annual Memorandum of Understanding

As the Board may recall, the County has a Memorandum of Understanding with the Virginia Cooperative Extension that provides for the operation of the York County Unit. The County has an established procedure wherein this Agreement is reviewed annually. The Board considers the financial contribution to Extension during the regular budget cycle. Decisions made at that time are reflected in the text of the Agreement and substantially define the nature of services to be provided during the upcoming fiscal year.

The annual service plan is developed jointly by the County's Community Services Director and the Extension Unit Coordinator. The objective is to fully integrate the Extension Unit into a continuum of comprehensive services available to County citizens. Coordination continues throughout the year and is reflected in joint projects, staff meeting participation and other forms of regular interaction. This planning and implementation process prevents duplication of effort and assures that Extension activities extend and enhance County programs.

The State fully funds a secretarial position. However, salaries for Extension Agents are funded by a cooperative formula shared by Federal, State and Local governments. Generally this is at the rate of 33.33% for each level of government. In recent years Virginia has reduced funding for Extension Services, leaving many positions vacant throughout the Commonwealth. For the past fiscal year the Agricultural Agent, James Orband, who also serves as Unit Coordinator, has been the only cooperatively funded staff person. The Family and Consumer Science (Home Economist) and 4H Agents have been vacant.

County staff considers the 4H functions to be extremely important. These mesh well with various other County programs and provide an important element in our efforts to assure a comprehensive array of activities for County youth. This is particularly critical for middle school ages - those who are too old for baby-sitters, too young for work permits and without productive use of leisure time can often be at-risk for various behavioral problems. Various creative mechanisms have sustained these functions for the past year and a half that the 4-H agent position has been vacant. I am pleased to tell you that prolonged and extensive negotiations between County staff and the state officials of Virginia Cooperative Extension have been successful. Funding for the 4-H agent position has been restored effective July 1, 2004.

The Memorandum of Understanding reflects cooperative local, state and federal cost sharing for the two agent positions. Funding in the amount of \$68,925 was approved for

FY2005. In addition, office space is provided as an in-kind contribution.

Recommendation

The County's Virginia Cooperative Extension Unit offers a wide array of services ranging from youth activities to horticultural guidance that protects our wetlands and greater environment. Further, in addition to direct services, this cooperative arrangement allows access to a broader network of technical information and resources through Virginia's Land Grant University System at both VPI and Virginia State University. These activities enhance and extend rather than duplicate County programs. The County's investment of space and \$68,925 is a relatively small portion of the overall budget for Extension programs and returns significant benefits for County citizens.

I recommend the adoption of Resolution R04-99.

Smith/4111

Attachments

- Proposed Memorandum of Understanding
- Proposed Resolution R04-99